

# The Handel and Haydn Society celebrates the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its founding

*Boston Mayor Martin Walsh has declared March 24, 2015 Handel and Haydn Society Day. March Bicentennial activities include the opening of an exhibition at the Boston Public Library, Central Library at Copley Square and an institute in partnership with the Music Critics Association of North America (MCANA).*

For two centuries, the Handel and Haydn Society (H+H) has made an enduring cultural impact on the City of Boston. At long last, H+H will observe in March the 200th anniversary of H+H's founding. Boston Mayor Martin Walsh has officially declared Tuesday, March 24 Handel and Haydn Society Day. A citywide celebration on that day includes the opening of a Bicentennial exhibition, which will be on view through September 5 at the Boston Public Library, Central Library at Copley Square.

The exhibition, "**Bringing Music to Life for 200 Years**" is an engaging survey of H+H's history, seen through the lens of classical music in America. Free to the public and enhanced by interactive media (including an H+H Smartphone app), the display includes priceless H+H archives (program books, newspaper clippings, and more) dating back to the early 1800s with a few surprises in store. The exhibition is presented in partnership with the Freedom Trail Foundation and the MIT Museum, and is made possible with funding from the Adams Arts Program of the Massachusetts Cultural Council and the Plymouth Rock Foundation.

March's Bicentennial festivities commence at Symphony Hall on March 6 and 8 with **Mendelssohn's epic *Elijah***. Premiered in Boston by the Handel and Haydn Society in 1848, *Elijah* quickly became one of the most popular oratorios performed by H+H. *Elijah* was the first work H+H performed in Symphony Hall and was a favorite of H+H Artistic Director (1986–2001) and Conductor Laureate (2001–2014) Christopher Hogwood who led triumphant performances of it in 2000 for Symphony Hall's centennial. The upcoming performances are dedicated to the memory of Hogwood who passed away in September. Former H+H Music Director Grant Llewellyn leads the Period Instrument Orchestra and Chorus and distinguished soloists: bass-baritone Andrew Foster-Williams (performing the title role of the Old Testament prophet), soprano Sarah Coburn, mezzo-soprano Christianne Stotijn, and tenor Andrew Kennedy.

Later in March, H+H reprises its sold-out 2012 performances of **Bach's *St. Matthew Passion***. Premiered in the US by H+H in 1879, Bach's one-of-a-kind masterwork demands the most from its soloists, double choir, double orchestra, and children's choir. H+H Artistic Director Harry Christophers will lead the Period Instrument Orchestra and Chorus, the VAP Young Women's and Young Men's Choruses in performances on Friday, March 27 and Sunday, March 29 at Symphony Hall. Soloists include tenor Joshua Ellicott (Evangelist), baritone Roderick Williams (Jesus), soprano Joëlle Harvey, mezzo-soprano Anna Stéphany, tenor Matthew Long, and baritone Sumner Thompson. H+H is proud to partner with WCRB which will present the live broadcast on March 29, Palm Sunday.

That weekend of performances coincides with **the Music Critics Association of North America (MCANA) Institute, hosted by the Handel and Haydn Society**. From March 26 through 30, a core group of 10 music journalists from across North America will convene in Boston to experience H+H and to participate in enriching discussions that will have broad implications for classical music. On Friday, March 27 from 1–3pm the Institute will host the symposium "The Handel and Haydn Society: Past, Present, and Future" at the Boston Public Library, Central Library at Copley Square. Moderated by *The Boston Globe*'s Classical Music Critic Jeremy Eichler, the symposium (free and open to the public) includes music writer Jan Swafford, H+H Executive Director and CEO Marie-Hélène Bernard, and music critic Donald Rosenberg as panelists. Funding for the MCANA Institute comes

from ArtsBoston with additional event sponsorship from the Handel and Haydn Society and Boston Symphony Orchestra.

## CONCERT INFORMATION

### **Mendelssohn *Elijah***

March 6, 2015, 7.30pm at Symphony Hall  
March 8, 2015, 3pm at Symphony Hall

Grant Llewellyn, *conductor*  
Andrew Foster-Williams, *bass-baritone*  
Sarah Coburn, *soprano*  
Christianne Stotijn, *mezzo-soprano*  
Andrew Kennedy, *tenor*

Handel and Haydn Society Period Instrument Orchestra and Chorus

### **Pre-Concert Conversation**

Led by Teresa M. Neff, Historically Informed Performance Fellow  
Friday, March 6 at 6.30pm and Sunday, March 8, 2pm at Symphony Hall's Higginson Hall. *Free with concert tickets.*

### **Bach *St. Matthew Passion***

March 27, 2015, 7.30pm at Symphony Hall  
March 29, 2015, 3pm at Symphony Hall

### ***Presenting Sponsor: Ropes & Gray, LLP***

Harry Christophers, *conductor*  
Joshua Ellicott, *Evangelist*  
Roderick Williams, *Jesus*  
Joëlle Harvey, *soprano*  
Anna Stéphany, *mezzo-soprano*  
Matthew Long, *tenor*  
Sumner Thompson, *baritone*

Handel and Haydn Society Period Instrument Orchestra and Chorus  
VAP Young Women's Chamber Choir and Young Men's Choruses

### **J.S. Bach's *Grand Passion***

Led by preeminent Bach scholars Christoph Wolff and Mary J. Greer, Wednesday, March 18, 2015 at 7.30pm at Paine Hall, Harvard University.

A discussion of Bach's seminal masterpiece *St. Matthew Passion*, its origins, and its place in the composer's output of sacred music. *Free admission.*

## **Pre-Concert Conversation**

Led by Teresa M. Neff, Historically Informed Performance Fellow” Friday, March 27 at 6.30pm and Sunday, March 29, 2pm at Symphony Hall’s Higginson Hall. *Free with concert tickets.*

## **Upcoming Bicentennial Events**

### **Exhibition at the Boston Public Library, Central Library in Copley Square**

**March 24 – September 5, 2015**

H+H’s extensive archives—containing a wealth of photos, concert program books, newspaper clippings, and more—date back to the early 1800s. Enhanced by interactive media, these treasures, along with a portion of the H+H collection held at the Boston Public Library, will be on view at the Boston Public Library for six months. Presented in partnership with the Freedom Trail Foundation and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the exhibition *The Handel and Haydn Society: Bringing Music to Life for 200 years* will explore H+H’s history through the lens of classical music in America. Exhibition admission is free of charge.

### **Beethoven Symphony No. 9**

**July 26, 2015 at 12.30pm**

This free outdoor performance of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony is H+H’s gift to the City of Boston. The H+H Period Instrument Orchestra and Chorus is joined by other choral ensembles from around New England, including the Harvard Summer Chorus (led by Andrew Clark) and H+H’s VAP youth choirs. H+H Resident Conductor Ian Watson directs.

### ***Haydn The Creation* CD**

**October 2015**

In celebration of H+H’s Bicentennial, CORO releases a new H+H recording of Haydn’s *Creation*, recorded at Symphony Hall in May 2015.

### **King’s Chapel Soirée**

**November 21, 2015**

Historic King’s Chapel, the site of H+H’s first public performance in 1815, is the setting for an intimate performance by the H+H Chorus, led by Harry Christophers.

**H+H at the Library of Congress, February 20, 2016**

Harry Christophers directs the D.C. premiere of a co-commissioned work by Gabriela Lena Frank, which receives its world premiere at the Chorus America Conference in Boston, Symphony Hall, on June 18, 2015.